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B. MAX MEHL
Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.

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NUMISMATIST,

Box 826. Fort Worth, Texas, U. S. A.

Mehl's Numismatic Monthly

Vol. I. FORT WORTH, TEXAS, MAY, 1908 No. 5

Newspaper and Magazine Clippings pertaining to Coins thankfully received. Contributions from those interested in the Science solicited and liberally paid for

The New U. S. Mint at Philadelphia.

The Mints of The United States

The Story of Coins In The Making

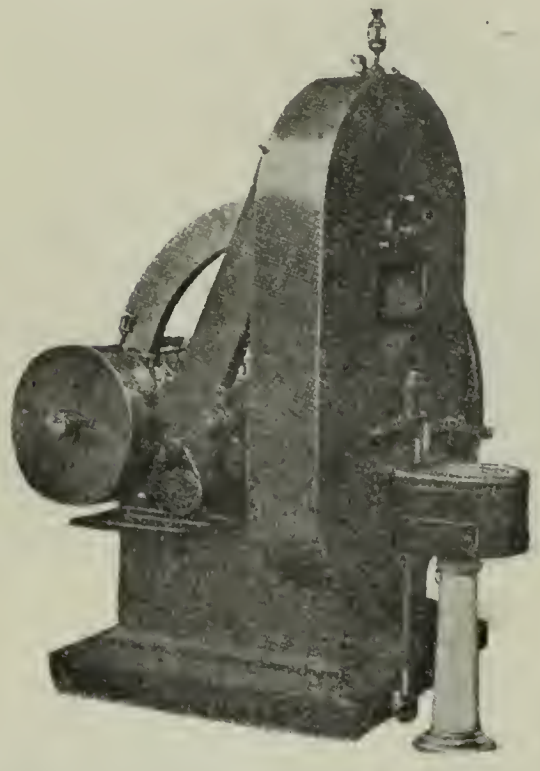
By WALDON FAWCETT

The Bureau of the Mint constitutes one of the most important branches of the United States Treasury, and unusual interest attaches to the dozen institutions which it maintains, in various parts of the country, and to which is entrusted the work of minting all the gold, silver, nickel and copper coins issued by this government. Up to the present time the bulk of the coining operations have been carried on at mints located at Philadelphia, San Francisco and New Orleans, but important supplementary work in the handling of bullion, etc., has been conducted by assay offices located at New York, Carson, Denver, Helena, Boise, Charlotte, St. Louis, Deadwood and Seattle.

Changing conditions in the country both in regard to the seat of greatest business activity and the principal sources of precious metals have gradually, however, exerted influence in favor of a readjustment of this system, and indeed is well under way. For some years past, Directors of the Mint have been recommending a curtailment of the coining operations at the mint at New Orleans, and the

substitution of the new mint at Denver as one of the three centers of activity in this sphere.

Undoubtedly when a permanent arrangement is perfected, within the next few years, the country will be left with three coinage mints—one on the Pacific coast, which will be the natural depository of the gold product of Alaska, the Pacific Coast States and of the imports from Australia and the Orient, one in the interior, convenient to the gold producers of



One of the many coin presses at the Philadelphia Mint.

the Rocky Mountain region; and one near the eastern coast, convenient to receive the imports from that direction.

The manufacture of all denominations of United States coins is seen to the best advantage at the magnificent mint at Philadelphia, illustrated at the head of this article. This mint, a comparatively new institution, cost the United States approximately $2,500,000 and is unquestionably the finest building ever constructed for coinage purposes in the world. The machinery and other equipment is without peer in any land. The force of about 700 employes regularly engaged at the Philadelphia mint is about three times as great as that at either of the other coining mints, and the operating expenses and output of coins are proportionately in excess of the records at other institutions. The statistics just compiled show that during the calendar year, 1907 the big institution in the Quaker City made a most remarkable record. There were coined, all told, 183,598,943 pieces of money (an increase of 16,948,710 pieces over the year 1906), representing a value of $63,263,104.93. During the year considerably more than four million gold pieces were coined, of which more than half a million was made up of the new design of eagles and double-eagles. Nearly four million coins were struck off for the Philippine government, and upward of two million pieces were minted for the government of Panama.

The modern mint, in which neither pains nor money is spared to provide the most approved machinery and the most economical methods, is in marked contrast to the coinage appliances of early times. It was not until 1836 that steam power was used, screw presses having been employed prior to that date, and the milling done by hand. A single milling machine, such as is in use today, will mill as many pieces in an hour as several men then produced in a week. Similarly, one modern coining press strikes, in an hour, more pieces than four men could strike in a day, under the old primitive conditions. During the first fifty years that the United States was producing coins there were turned out a total of ninety million dollars. Now the officials of the Philadelphia mint consider it nothing exceptional to coin that many dollars in a single year.

The Philadelphia mint is at once a palace, of the order appropriate to a structure of the government—a treasure house, a workshop and a factory

of the highest class. The building, which is of granite, occupies a full city block, and covers 58,000 square feet. It is three stories in height above the basement. In the basement are the vaults for the storage of coin and bullion. There are a score of these steel-lined vaults, most of them more than 100 feet in length, and more than 3,000,000 pounds of steel were used in the construction of these "strong boxes." The vaults are, of course, protected by every modern safeguard and are so constructed that watchmen can pass completely around them.

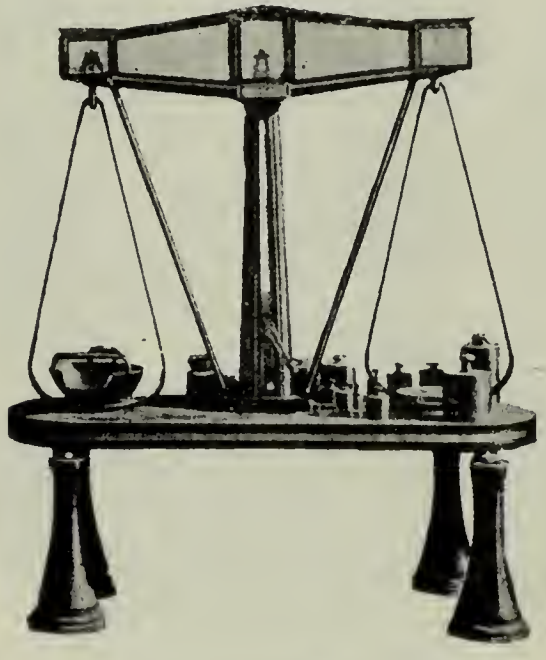
Coin adjusting room. Testing gold and silver coin for required weight.

One of the great advances in recent years, in mint processes, has been made in the melting department, where gas furnaces have supplanted those in which coal was burned. Each furnace now employed must be capable of melting 250 pounds of bullion at a charge, and of making at least five melts in eight hours, thus handling over half a ton of metal each day. Seventeen of these modern gas furnaces—each of a capacity of 25 per cent in excess of the old-time coal furnace—are now in operation at the Philadelphia mint. An important adjunct of the melting department is the refinery, in which gold and other metals are parted and refined from their baser components, preparatory to the operation of coining.

After the design of a coin or medal has been duly approved, the work of preparing dies at the mint proceeds in accordance with one of two plans. By the oldest of these methods the surface of the face of the die is covered with a thin coating of transfer wax, which, by means of pressure, is made to receive a tracing outlined in pencil. The transfer is, of course, very delicate, and the lines must be gone over with a sharp-pointed instrument. The next process is to remove the steel, where the form or relief is required. This is done with chisels and gravers. Finally the die is hardened, and is then ready for use in making coins and medals. A second process necessitates, as its first step, the preparation in wax of a model of the accepted design, the model being three or four times as large as the finished work is intended to be. When this model is finished an electrotype is made, and then, by means of a reducing lathe, a reduced copy is made of the size required for the coin. Some of the most delicate

portions of the design, which cannot be entrusted to the reducing apparatus, are worked in by hand. Then the die is hardened and tempered and is ready to fulfill its mission in producing coins.

The most interesting of all coining operations is the production of gold coins. It may be taken as representative of all manipulations of this class. The ingots as received from the smelter and refiner vary in size and weight according to the denomi-



Scales at the U. S. Mint, Philadelphia.

nation of the coin for which they are to be used. The first operation in the transformation of ingots into coin is called "breaking down," nd consists in passing these oblong pieces of precious metal between heavy rolls with the result that the ingots are formed into "strips." Double eagles and eagles are passed through the finishing rolls three times, half eagles and quarter eagles go through four times. After an operation, similar to that of wire drawing, the strips of gold are taken to cutting presses and by means of a steel punch, working into a matrix, the planchets or blanks are cut from the strips. These will later be transformed into coins by the impressing of the insignia of the government.

However, these embryo coins receive a great amount of attention ere they go to the coining presses. First of all they are cleansed of grease, and then rinsed in clean water and dried in a large copper pan, heated by steam. Next, the planchets are taken to selecting tables, and all the perfect blanks separated from the imperfect ones. Finally, each piece is weighed in what is known as the adjusting department of the mint. If a blank is found to be heavier than the legal requirement, the edge is filed down, but if lighter than required by law, there is nothing for it but to condemn the piece of metal, and send it back to the smelter and refiner to be remelted.

The milling protects the surface of the coin from abrasion. In the milling machines the blansk are fed by hand into a vertical tube, and one by one are caused to rotate in a horizontal plane in a groove formed on one side by a revolving wheel and on the other by a fixed segment of corresponding groove. Each piece, as it passes through this narrow groove, has its edge evenly forced up into a border or rim.

The milled pieces are now subjected to a further cleansing. To facilitate this cleansing, as well as to soften the pieces for the imprint of the dies, they are annealed by heating to a cherry red, then dipped into a solution of sulphuric acid and water, sufficiently strong to clean and brighten them. After being thoroughly rinsed in boiling water they are hand riddled in sawdust to dry them, and are then ready for the stamping press.

The most important operation in the stamping of coins is the adjustment of the dies in the press. This adjustment requires great skill and long experience, much depending upon the character of the metal to be

operated upon. The blank pieces of metal that are to be made into coins are fed to the coining press through a vertical tube, and as each piece reaches the bottom of the tube, steel feeders carry it over between the dies, and place it in a steel collar. Thus suspended the blank is closed upon by the dies, which have tremendous pressure behind them, and the obverse and reverse impressions are made at the same time. For making sharp, clear impressions upon double eagles a pressure of 175 tons is employed, whereas 120 tons is sufficient to stamp the eagle, which is, of course, of smaller design. Double eagles and eagles are struck at the rate of eighty per minute, while half eagles and quarter eagles are struck at the rate of one hundred per minute.

With the exception of some technical details connected with the process of annealing, the operations incidental to the coinage of silver are identical with those for gold, as above described. A pressure of 150 tons is necessary to stamp a silver dollar, 110 tons for a half dollar, 80 tons for a quarter and 40 tons for a dime. Dollars, half dollars and quarters are produced at the rate of 80 per minute, while dimes are turned out at an average rate of 100 per minute. The counting of coins of all denominations is one of the important tasks at the mints. Gold coin is put up in drafts of $5,000 each. Silver coin is put up in drafts of $1,000 each. Of course, all coins of a given denomination are not identical in size, or rather, in weight, some being heavier and others lighter than the standard weight. The government allows a limit of tolerance for fluctuation. This legal limit is one-hundredth of an ounce in $5,000 worth of gold, or two-hundredths of an ounce in $1,000 worth of silver, but as a matter of fact it is seldom that an allotment of coin approaches anywhere near this amount of variation from standard.

A strict record is kept of all precious metal handled at the mints, in order that losses in the process of manufacture may be minimized. How watchful an eye is kept on all operations connected with money making is indicated by the care exercised with regard to "sweeps," which is a broad general term used at the mints to refer to every kind of waste material known to contain, or likely to contain, gold or silver. The floor of the melting room is swept each day, and the gatherings from the broom are thrown into one of the crucibles, so that scarcely a particle of the precious raw material is wasted.

The actual "sweeps" consist of broken crucibles and dipping cans, all ashes from the fires, burnt gloves, aprons, sawdust and packages in which bullion has been sent to the mint, and even the settlings in catch wells and roof gutters—in short everything which may contain bullion without its being visible to the eye. A considerable portion of the "sweeps" are sold, and at the Philadelphia mint from $18,000 to $20,000 is received every year from the sweeps produced in the melting department alone.—Bank Notes.

We feel almost sure that through some little effort on the part of our friends we could increase the circulation of this publication considerably and therefore increase our usefulness. We do not ask something for nothing, but are offering a very liberal commission of 33 1-3% on new subscriptions. In other words, we will give you 50 cents for every three new subscribers you may send in. A few extra copies gladly furnished to any subscriber.

"I am well pleased with your Numismatic Journal and succeed in getting much valuable information out of every number."

CLAUDE C. DAY.

Russian Roubles

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF COMMON TYPES.

Read before the Chicago Numismatic Society by Geo. W. Tracy.

While Russian Roubles, and for that matter Russian coins of other values, may not provide the most interesting study for the average collector, a knowledge of the many varieties in type and mint mark must be of value to any one collecting these series. Russian coins are probably collected less extensively, on this side of the Atlantic, than those of any other important European state; hence there has been little or no incentive to publish, in America, information concerning them, and imported literature on the subject is not often available. But, even when it is, it is nearly always in the Russian language, and the American student finds himself confronted not only by a foreign language, but also by an unknown alphabet.

The phenomenal growth of interest in numismatic subjects, which has marked the last few years, may procure Russian coinage a little more attention, and a few facts relating to that country's mintage may not be amiss at this time. The present article will treat silver Roubles only, reserving those in gold and copper for some future occasion; patterns, with the exception of a few of the more common varieties, will not be included, as many of the trial pieces are so exceedingly rare that they are but seldom met with in Russia, and practically never found outside of that country. Inscriptions will be translated into English, the translation only being given, and for the Russian mint letters the English equivalent will be used.

The earliest pieces which come within the province of this article are the necessity roubles of Alexis

Silver Rouble 1707.

Michaelovitch (1645-76), made by counterstamping thalers of various European countries in 1655. Each coin bears two counterstamps, the one circular, showing the crowned Czar, mounted on a prancing horse, facing right, and holding in his right hand a spear pointed downward, as if at a prostrate enemy. The letter M for Moscow appears in the field beneath the body of the horse. The other counterstamp shows the date 1655 in an oblong depression. These pieces are not of great rarity, although specimens with sharp perfect counterstamps are not easily obtained; they are, however, remarkable from the fact that they are the first Russian coins on which the date

is given according to the Christian era. In all probability, the counter-stamping of these coins, in such large numbers that they are still comparatively common, was occasioned by the expenses of the wars which Alexis carried on at this period with Poland (1654-67) and Sweden (1655-58).

No roubles are known of the two princes, Feodor III (1676-82) and Ivan II (1682-89), son of Alexis by his first marriage, who succeeded him to the throne. Peter I, son of Alexis by his second wife, reigned jointly

Silver Rouble 1705.

with Ivan; Sophia, Peter's half sister acting as regent during the minority of the two princes. A conspiracy, said to have been instigated by Sophia with the object of putting Peter to death, met with failure and Sophia was incarcerated in a convent. Ivan feeble both in body and mind, took little part in the government, and Peter ruled practically alone from 1689.

PETER I (1689-1725).

With this ruler, better known as Peter the Great, the series of roubles in which collectors are principally interested really commences. The first rouble of his reign is dated 1704 (see illustration of 1705) and presents on the obverse his bust facing right, surrounded by the legend (trans) **Czar Peter Alexievitch Sovereign of all Russia.** The reverse shows the Russian double eagle, triply crowned holding the scepter in one talen and the orb in the other. The legend (trans) reads **Good coin of the value of one rouble 1704,** the date being also in Russian characters. This type is reproduced in 1705.

On the next piece, 1707 (see illustration) no roubles of 1706 being known, the bust of Peter is laureated, and is larger than on the previous type, extending to the lower edge of the coin. The legend reads the same as before, but commences at the shoulder left and ends at the shoulder right. The reverse bears the Russian eagle as before, but differently executed, with the legend above (trans) **Moscow Rouble.** The date, in Russian characters, is below, divided by the eagle's tail. This piece occurs also with the date in arabic numerals. There is another rouble of this year with the date in Russian characters on which the reverse legend appears in two lines, both the words Moscow and Rouble being divided by the crown over the eagle. This is probably a pattern and is extremely rare.

No roubles appear to have been issued in 1708 and 1709.

(To be continued)

If you have anything to sell or want to buy anything, try an ad in our Trade Column.

The Beginning of a Coin Collection

Written for MEHL'S NUMISMATIC MONTHLY

By CHAS. E. JENNEY.

Different incidents influence the starting of a coin collector in his career. Sometimes a curious foreign coin or an odd old domestic coin attracts his attention, and with the possession of it comes the desire to acquire more. Sometimes he comes into immediate possession of a small collection of coins, and the study of their heraldry, as I might call it, interests him. Sometimes he is offered more than face value for a coin he chances to have in his pocket and the financial side appeals to him until at last the regular coin mania seizes him.

I well remember how I became interested in its attractions. My brother and I each had small toy banks in which we kept our small earnings until they became large enough to deposit in the savings bank. Quite frequently we would count over and assort the denominations, and finally we competed to see who would first get a cent of every year. The small copper cents in use now were then in vogue and comprised a large percent of our earnings, and we would get nickles, dimes and quarters changed into coppers in order to more quickly complete our sets.

It was thus we learned, long before we knew anything about coin collecting values, that the 1877 cent was much harder to get than any of the others, but at last we had them complete, from the 1857 flying eagle up to date. Having been to so much trouble to collect them, we therefore wanted to keep them and add each year the new one as it came out.

Then a friend who was a storekeeper, who had in the previous years, before the large cents were entirely retired, accumulated quite a lot of them, perhaps 300 or 400, offered to sell them all to us at one and a half cents each. This seemed such a bargain that we accepted and found on assorting them that there was a nearly complete set among them, lacking only six or seven dates.

Having attained as much success as seemed possible in the copper cents within our means, we began to collect the different dates of two, three and small five-cent pieces, assured that if we could not afford to maintain them in our collection we could at any time spend them for face value, and also feeling that the bank interest on these amounts, if deposited, would not equal the premium that ten or twenty years would add to them. In this we were right.

So our collection has grown; quarters and halves have been attempted but we have not got to the dollars yet. Most have been collected at face value; now and then a scarce date or an old one we felt we could pay its premium on as a luxury. As completion draws near, the eagerness increases, and some of the coins have to be bought.

Foreign coins have in the meantime been saved until a large accumulation of them has been effected, but a miscellaneous collection of all the world is rather beyond one collector's scope, and the foreign, except in the case of certain pieces of historic interest, do not fascinate like the United States coinage.

Of course, anything like a completion of the United States coins is practically beyond the reach of any but a very wealthy and lucky person combined. But this does not detract from the interest in the game, for it is pursuit more than possession that gives pleasure.

Extracts from the Diary of Samuel Pepys, Esq., F. R. S.

Clerk of the Acts of the Navy, in the Exchequer, in the reigns of Charles II. and James II.

Prepared for MEHL'S NUMISMATIC MONTHLY

By S. S. HEAL.

Illustrated with photographs taken by Mr. Heal from coins in his collection

It is remarkable that James II was sitting to Sir Godfrey Kneller for a portrait designed as a present to

English Crown, 1662.

Pepys, when the news of the landing of the Prince of Orange was brought to that unhappy monarch. The king commanded the painter to proceed and finish the portrait, that his good friend might not be disappointed.

Pepys had been too much personally connected with the king (who as Duke of York had been so long at the admiralty) to retain his situation upon the accession of William and Mary; and he retired into private life but without being followed thither either by persecution or ill-will.

"Feb. 18th, 1661. We met with Mr. Slingsby, who showed me the stamps of the King's new coyne; which is strange to see, how good they are in the stamp and bad in the money, for lack of skill to make them. But he says Blondeau will shortly come over and then we shall have it better and the best in the world."

"Nov. 24th, 1662. Sir J. Mnnes Sir W. Batten, and I, going forth toward White Hall, we hear that the King (Charles II) and Duke (of York) are come this morning to the Tower (the Tower of London, in which was situated the 'Tower' mint) to see the Dunkirke money. So we by coach to them, and there went up and down all the magazines with them. We saw none of the money, but Mr. Slingsby (Master of the Mint) did show the King, and I did see, the stamps of the new money that is now to be made by Blondeau's fashion, which are very neat, and like the King."

"March 9th, 1663. There dined with us today Mr. Slingsby of the mint, who showed us all the new pieces, both gold and silver (examples of them all) that were made for the

English ½ Crowns of Chas. II and James II.
The Father (Chas. I) and His Two Sons, Chas. II, James II.

Scotch Dollar, 1676.

King, by Blondeau's way; and compared them with those made for Oliver. The pictures of the latter, made by Symons (Thomas Simon), and of the King by one Rotyr (Rotier), a German, I think that dined with us also. He extolls those of Rotyr above the others; and indeed, I think they are the better, because the sweeter of the two; but, upon my word, those of the Protector are more like in my mind than the King's, but both very well worth seeing. The crownes of Cromwell are now sold, it seems, for twenty-five and thirty shillings a-piece."

"May 19th, 1663. With Sir John Minnes to the Tower; and by Mr. Slingsby, and Mr. Howard, Controller of the Mint, we were shown the method of making this new money That being done, the Controller would have us dine with him and his company, the King giving them a dinner every day. They now coyn; between 16 and 24,000 pounds in a week."

Shilling (Scots) of Charles I, by Falconer.

MUST WEAR HONOR BADGES.

War Department Makes It Mandatory on Soldiers.

Washington, D. C., April 11.—The War Department has officially declared that campaign badges are a part of the uniform of an officer and that it is necessary for officers to wear them as is required in the case of insignia of rank.

The department has adopted a design for the civil war badges, with the head of Lincoln on the obverse side, together with the motto "With malice toward none, with charity to all." The reverse side contains the legend "The civil war 1861 to 1865," surrounded by a wreath.

In our next number we shall publish an unusually interesting article on "California Currency," written for this magazine by E. H. Adams. Mr Adams spent some time on the Pacific coast investigating the true history of these most interesting piece and our readers are assured of an excellent and true sketch of one of the most interesting series of our coinage. The article will be illustrated with half-tone plates taken direct from the rarest coins of this series.

Clippings for the past month were thankfully received from Messrs. Field, Warner, Adams, Lagerberg Martin and Williams. There are always some coin items in the papers that are worth reprinting, and we are always glad to receive them.

"I have your magazine before me and want to congratulate you on the marked improvement in each issue. This journal is just what the amateur collector needs. I bespeak for it a very bright future and a very prominent place among the magazines of real worth." M. S. HUFFORD.

A Letter from Uncle George to His Nephew John

My Dear John: Have you ever thought what constitutes a real collector? I consider him one who collects for the love of it, one who is willing to spend good money on coins that he is interested in without any hope of making a profit by their sale—one who makes some effort to complete the series he is most interested in, and who devotes some time to their study.

It is not enough to obtain the coin and place it in your collection; find out what there is to know about it; a coin that requires no study is of small interest to the real collector. Your coins should not interest you commercially but historically, and not only historically but as a lesson to be worked out. The field is so vast that you can hardly help becoming a specialist. Try for completeness in some given series, otherwise you waste your energies, your time and the money you put in your hobby. While it is rather difficult to determine exactly what coins to collect, it is easier to determine what coins we will pass by.

Coins are original documents that teach and often make history with which they go hand in hand. Theodoric the Goth, in Cassiodorus, is quoted as saying "with the assistance of coins you teach posterity the events of my reign." Gibbon, in "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," says: "Were all the other records destroyed, the travels of Hadrian might be known by his coins alone;" and speaking of the Roman coinage, he says: "For history they worked best telling the story of the first two-and-a-half centuries with a fullness that entitles their coins to be called the Imperial Gazette."

Remember that a coin may be old, but not rare. Hadrian issued 438 varieties of first bronze, and they vary in value from $1.00 to $60.00 in fine condition. Never buy an ancient coin that is in poor condition. Badly worn and rubbed specimens are worth next to nothing. Buy only well-preserved ones.

Our Colonial and private issues are capable of much study, so likewise are Canadians, which most of us have neglected in the past, but which are now beginning to get the attention they deserve.

There is, however, another vast field on this hemisphere that can be taken up if we wish to collect coins on this side of the water. The Mexican, West Indian, Central and South American series are almost untouched by our own collectors, and if we do not begin pretty soon to work up and investigate the coinages of these countries south of us, Europe will do it while we are puttering away at completing a line of dates of coins that by their external aspect tell us nothing about who our President was, or any pertinent matter of history. In fact, Europe today knows more about the Pan-American coinages than we do. So, try to determine which series interests you the most, and when you have made up your mind—stick to it; but do not attempt to collect everything.

Yet I do not advise your making any iron-bound rule not to collect any other coins than those in a certain series, but mainly concentrate your efforts in one direction, and get it as complete as possible.

The man who is least valued in the labor world is he who is a Jack at all trades, but master of none.

I was pleased to see your application for membership in the Numismatist and amused by your account of the letters received from some of the members who desire to assist you in your collecting, and offered their services to this

end. It is strange (and somewhat suspicious) that they all have so many duplicates and are so anxious to help you. I am afraid most of them are professional collectors—I had almost said peddlers. These men constitute a class distinct from either dealers or collectors.

Every collector, by circumstances, may at times be classed as a dealer; he has to get rid of his duplicates, and he at times get coins with others that he does not want, but which he was obliged to buy to obtain those desired. Also, if he is any good at all, he falls into the way of getting coins cheap, and if he knows that the coin is good his knowledge is worth something. I have bought coins to sell over again; I have sold coins out of my own cabinet when some one else has come along and has wanted it worse than I did; I also have given as many coins away as I have sold, and I have sold as many coins at cost as at a profit. I have speculated in the new $20 gold pieces, but the majority of the coins I buy are for my own pleasure with no thought of future profit but rather with a knowledge of future loss. I consider myself a bona-fide collector.

A true dealer should have just as much respect as a collector. He openly buys coins to sell over again and at a profit. Many a dealer may have a certain specialty; a number of them have, and are the better for it, as they are the more truly interested in the science. But the man who holds down some other job and goes about, from town to town, claiming that he is a collector, but only looks at a coin through dollars and cents glasses is to be condemned. He claims that he has a collection, but on a show down cannot produce it. He is not a collector; he is a peddler, and a small one at that.

Another thing, one of the great delights in collecting is the good fellowship that exists between true collectors. They are always ready and anxious to help each other in every possible way. Correspondence with other kindred souls is certainly not the least of the charms of coin collecting.

I have been very fortunate in this respect, having some ideal correspondents, men I should never have heard of but for joining the A. N. A., and from whom I have received every possible kindness. Did I get an ancient Greek, a Byzantine, or a Canadian blacksmith's token that turned out a puzzler, I had but to write to one of them and the mystery was solved. UNCLE GEORGE.

One of our friends expresses surprise at the very small number of numismatic publications now being published in this country. There is very little wonder that there are so few numismatic publications, but there is great wonder at the small number of coin collectors who are willing to support a publication of that sort. In a way the collector can not be blamed for looking with a doubtful eye on any new publications in our line, owing to the number of new ones bobbing up now and then, and, after a short life, dropping out. The publisher of a new magazine can not expect to receive the support of the reading public unless he gives them good, original matter from the very first and not wait until his subscription list reaches a stage where he can afford to give better and more reading matter. We believe that this publication is the only one in its class that pays for its contributions. We are offering our readers every month original matter not to be found in any other publication, and from our little experience in this line we find that good material can be obtained if gone after in the right manner. We shall try to bring this magazine up to the highest standard ever reached by any like publication. But it takes another thing for a successful life of a journal, and something we are unable to supply.

It is, your support.

And we hope to deserve it by an endless effort to please you.

THE CHICAGO NUMISMATIC SOCIETY.

The fifty-first monthly meeting of the above named society was held in their rooms, 1622 Masonic Temple, Friday evening, April 3rd. President V. M Brand presiding. The following members were present: Messrs. Verkler Carey, W. F. Dunham, McDonald, V. M. Brand, Brenner, Simpson, Excell, Blumenschein, Merrill, Chester Dunham, Holmes, Baker, Ripstra, Lewis and Green. The resignation of W. O. Staab was received and accepted. The following gentlemen were elected to membership: Otto Darmstaetter, Fred F. Thuemling, A. M. Tierney, Chas. A .Windau, John T. Kelly, M. J. Cooney, Wm. Poillon and E. W. Jeffrey. The president appointed Messrs. Green and Williams as two of the editorial committee.

A motion was carried to present a silver medal of the fiftieth meeting to Mr. J. H. Ripstra, the engraver of the dies. A donation of 59 medals, etc., was received from Messrs. F. H. Noble & Co. for the cabinet of the society. Mr. W. F. Dunham exhibited a number of United States half dollars, and Mr. V. M. Brand some very fine aurei.

The following magazines were received: Philatelic West, Spink's Numismatic Circular and Numismatische Correspondenz for March. Auction catalogues were received from Elder, Green and Adolph Hess (3).

Adjourned to meet May 1st, 1908. BEN G. GREEN, Secretary.

AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY, of New York.

The fiftieth anniversary of the American Numismatic and Archaelogical Society was celebrated on the evening of April 6th in the society's new building at the corner of Broadway and 156th street. President Archer M. Huntington delivered a short address. William R. Weeks, librarian of the society, read the history of the society and William Poillon, the curator, read an account of its collections, which now number some 41,000 coins, medals and tokens.

Bauman Lowe Belden, the secretary, announced that Archer M. Huntington, from whom the society had borrowed $25,000 to complete the $54,000 new building, had cancelled the notes and that the society stood clear of debt. It

was voted that a gold medal be given to the president. Mr. Huntington gave the land on which the new building stands.

The secretary announced also that the collection of gold coins of the United States given to the American Museum of Natural History by J. P. Morgan had, with Mr. Morgan's consent, been transferred to the keeping of the Numismatic society and is now on exhibition there.

J. de Lagerberg, representing the Numismatic Society of Stockholm, Sweden, extended the greeting of that society and presented the diplomas of membership conferred on President Archer M. Huntington, Corresponding Secretary Henry Russel Drowne, Curator William Poillon and Mr. de Lagerberg, member of the committee on foreign medals.

The meeting was of an enthusiastic character, and crowded with members and visitors.

United States Assay Medal 1908.

The Assay Commission met in Philadelphia last month and tested the weight and fineness of coins from the several mints, which had been reserved for that purpose. Each member of the commission was presented with a beautiful silver medal, of which the above is a good illustration. The medals were made in the Philadelphia mint, from dies cut by Mr. Morgan.—The Bulletin.

Original articles on numismatic topics never fail to attract the attention and appreciation of the real coin collector, but we have been fortunate in obtaining something unusual in the way of numismatic literature, something that has never before been published and which now seems to be very popular—the letters of "Uncle George" and "John." Mr. Howland Wood has the following to say regarding these articles: "The Uncle George and John letters are receiving as much comment as anything that has appeared in the numismatic papers. Everybody seems interested in them and speaks well of them. * * * They are a good thing and good ought to come out of them."

COINAGE OF THE LATIN UNION.

France, Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland formed many years ago a "Latin Union," the purpose of which was uniform coinage. They adopted the "double standard" of gold and silver, and the coins of each country circulated legally in all the countries of the union. In 1876 the coinage of silver was discontinued, and later each government excluded all except its own coins from circulation. Since that time no silver coins, even of the smaller denominations, have been minted, except by agreement among the four governments. In 1902 they sanctioned the issue of specified amounts of small coins by each government, to be spread over a period of six years. They have lately concluded a new agreement for a ten-year period. France may coin three hundred and eighty million francs during that time in two-franc, one-franc, and half-franc pieces, and will use for that purpose its five-franc coins, thus diminishing its stock of legal-tender silver. It intends to use the profit on this coinage to substitute nickel small coins for the big bronze sous. Many of the countries of Continental Europe already have nickel coins, but Great Britain still sticks to its heavy and cumbersome pennies.—The "Youths' Companion."

In a shipment of gold coins from Moline, Ill., to the National Bank of the Republic, of Chicago, the other day, a Clark, Gruber and Co. $20 of 1861 was found. This, in connection with the recent finding of the rare Wass, Molitor & Co. $20 in New York, would seem to indicate that the hard times are bringing forth pieces from hoards.

Mr. Adams informs us that while in Colorado he looked up the Conway pieces, and found that instead of having been struck at Denver, as has been generally supposed, the pieces were struck at the gold diggings located at the mouth of Georgia Gulch by the firm of J. J. Conway & Co., jewelers and bankers, in the summer of 1861, although none of the pieces are dated.

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EXCHANGE—Eastern Hemisphere copper coins for those of Western, Scott's basis. Send list, stating countries wanted. U. S. 02 proof set complete, fine, for 93, 99 or 04 cents. Geo. A. Field, Sanford, Me.

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